

FLEET Focus

Reuben James Sailor named Junior Sailor of 2000

By Lt. j.g. Jose Fikes
USS Reuben James

Interior Communications Technician 3rd Class (SW) Thomas R. Samella was awarded the Middle Pacific Junior Sailor of the Year Award Jan. 29 for his dedicated service onboard USS Reuben James (FFG - 57).
Samella originally enlisted in the Army in January 1993. After three years of service in the Army, he enlisted in the Navy in January 1999 at Naval Training Center (NTC) Great Lakes. Upon completion of his training at NTC Great Lakes he received the award for Distinguished Military Graduate, an award given to the top 10 percent of graduates.

For the first six months of the past year, Samella served as the only Interior Communications Technician (IC) onboard Reuben James. During this time, as an IC Fireman, he served as the workcenter supervisor, a position normally assigned to senior 1st class or 2nd class petty officer. He also flawlessly maintained the ships' gyrocompass, general announcing system, several ship's Control Consoles, and Site 300 CCTV. In addition to maintaining Helo Control Consoles and the "Cinema At Sea."
Samella's technical abilities were proven by a near 100 percent performance of all communications equipment during the Cooperative Afloat Readiness and Training

(CARAT-00) deployment.
During this deployment he also volunteered to provide technical assistance to the USS Sides (FFG - 11), a Royal Thai Navy ship, and two Republic of the Philippines Navy ships, correcting four critical navigation equipment casualties and identifying the problem with two others.
He is routinely called upon to assist other workcenters in identifying and correcting equipment casualties including 2-M repairs on various circuit cards, the 76mm gun system, and the ship's fathometer.
Samella unselfishly sacrificed liberty time on deployment and volunteered for Operation Handclasp community service projects during

three separate port visits.
These projects included aiding in the preservation of an elementary school, paving a parking lot, and rebuilding a community center in Brunei, Singapore, and Lumut Malaysia.
His actions helped build and foster goodwill and cooperation with our South East Asian allies.
"Petty Officer Samella is a stalwart. His impact on the readiness of the entire ship is noticeable every day," stated Cmdr. Carl Cramb, Commanding Officer, USS Reuben James.
"He aggressively attacks and resolves the most complex problems, unselfishly giving of his free time if necessary to make it happen. In ad-

dition, he is not only concerned about the welfare of his shipmates but those in the community. In the past year Petty Officer Samella has been a positive force in improving the material condition of the ship and the morale of those he comes in contact with daily. He represents the finest in the Navy."
In the midst of a complex schedule he continued to further his watchstanding knowledge and responsibilities by completing 37 personnel qualifications this year to include Combat Systems Officer of the Watch (CSOOW) and Enlisted Surface Warfare Specialist (ESWS).
He was the most junior Sailor onboard Reuben James to earn his ESWS pin.



Bravo Zulu

Naval Medical Clinic, Pearl Harbor

Civilian of the 4th Quarter
William Buck, Senior
Candace Tyner, Junior

Sailor of the 4th Quarter, CY-00
Bluejacket - HN Melissa M. Martinez
Junior Sailor - HM2 John E. Washington
Senior Sailor - HM1 Matthew E. Hanks

Sailor of the Year, CY-00
Bluejacket - HM3 Joel A. Lakey
Junior Sailor - HM2 Donald C. Schrader
Senior Sailor - HM1 Gene N. Fontimayor

Partrol Squadron Four (VP-4)

Navy Commendation Medals
LCDR Thomas Peck
LT Will Pennington
AVCM William Mayeaux
ADCS Philip Decker
AWC Brian Charltray
AOC Darwin Kipilii
AMH1 Antonio Galindo

Navy Achievement Medals
LT Mark Kochalka
LT Kim Jagiello
AW1 Albert Kuhaneck
AW3 Max Vaughn

Flag Letters of Commendation
AMS1 Kenneth Taylor
AT2 Andrew Corcoran
AD1 Bruce Vandemark
AT2 Karen Delacruz
AME2 Nestor Beltranmeza
YN2 Jackie Fraelich
AW2 Allen Buckspan
AW2 Josiah Julin
AMS2 Noel DeJesus
AE2 Roderick Rivo
AK2 April Montano
AZ2 Shawn Brown
AW2 Michael Cole
AW3 Brandon Fields
AW2 Mark Pelchat
PN3 Tonya Calais
AT2 Charles Reynnells
AT3 Thomas Johnson
AD2 Paul Starcher
PR3 Keith Schaefer
MS2 Richard Thomas

Wing Letter of Commendation
AE2 Termicheal Taylor

VP-4 Letters of Commendation
AMS2 Sheldon Clark
AT2 Richard Perezrosa
MS3 Barbara Fratus
AMS3 Jacob McDermott
AW3 Max Vaughn

Good Conduct Medals
AO3 Chad Hamm
AE3 Corey Ross
AE3 Brendon Brown

Enlisted Aviation Warfare Specialist
AD1 Reynaldo Sonza
PR2 Randall Lewis

Sailor of the Quarter
AZ1 Aoatoa Augafa

Golden Lens Award Frocking Letters
LT Jeff Chandler
MS2 Richard Thomas
AW2 Jason Vaught
AE2 Forrest Musheer

Defense Information Systems Agency, Pacific

Shore Sailor of Year 2000
YN1 (AW) Cyrus Z. Best

Frederick big mover during MARLIFT '01



Lt. Jeffery Melton photo

BM2(SW) Finley directs traffic and guides USS Frederick Sailors during MARLIFT '01. More than 300 Marine Corps vehicles and 800 Marines were transported by the USS Frederick in support of the Hawaii Combined Arms Operation.

By Lt. Jeffery Melton
USS FREDERICK

USS Frederick recently got underway to conduct MARLIFT '01. During this operation, Frederick transported over 800 U.S. Marine Corps personnel, 300 vehicles, and numerous small arms and ammunition from Pearl Harbor to Hilo.
This was done in support of Hawaii Combined Arms Operation (HCAO), a training exercise that takes place twice a year and consists of infantry, artillery, and air units.
Once in Hilo, the Marines began a 45-mile road march to the Pohakuloa Training Area to begin the operation.

During the fourth load, 14 AAV's (Amphibious Assault Vehicles) were loaded into Frederick's tank deck.
These amphibious armored personnel carriers have a crew of three Marines and provide ground support for the infantry units.
That night, drivers and crews were ordered to man their vehicles for a night launch, and shortly after, Frederick's stern gate was lowered and the first wave of AAV's "splashed" into the water for a 30 minute 3,000 meter swim to the shore.
Sailors on watch in the combat information center tracked and monitored each wave, ensuring the safety of all ve-

hicles.
For some Marines, this was their first night operation and for others, this was their very first operational period.
Gunnery Sgt. Young, commander of the AAV's, stated that morale was high and that Sailors and Marines would receive excellent training from this evolution. Others likes Pfc. Hayes and Cpl. Moore were simply looking forward to "splashing" their AAV's for the first time. "This has been a really good group of Marines to work with," said Boatswains' Mate 2nd Class (SW) Finley. "The Navy-Marine Corps team has really been strengthened by this operation."

Fletcher Sailors offer help in East Timor

By Ens. Malia Spofford
USS Fletcher

Crewmembers on board USS Fletcher (DD 992) went ashore at Dili, East Timor, before returning from their Western Pacific (WESTPAC) deployment. While in Dili, they participated in a United Nations effort wholly different than the Maritime Interception Operations (MIO) conducted by the USS Abraham Lincoln (CVN 72) Carrier Battle Group (CVBG) during the previous three months in the Arabian Gulf.
Sailors devoted four days to helping the people of East Timor transition to a stable new country by renovating a community center, hosting local civic and peacekeeping force leaders and youth scouts on board Fletcher, and donating materials to a local orphanage and medical clinic through Project Handclasp.
East Timor, located just north of Australia and east of Indonesia, was a Portuguese colony until 1975 and under Indonesian militia rule until September 1999 when the people of East Timor voted for independence in a U.N-sponsored election.
The mountainous island nation has been the site of oppressive and violent government for hundreds of years, and their recent vote for independence spurred the Indonesian-sponsored militias to scorch the earth behind them as they left.
An estimated 270,000 East Timorese were displaced from their homes, either fleeing the violence or forcibly removed to West Timor, where many still reside in camps.
The United Nations has established a transitional administration in Dili, the capital city, in an effort to form a defense force, a stable government and viable economy, as well as to return all

displaced civilians to their homes.
"It is so beautiful that you can't imagine that there were massacres and looting here just a few years ago," said Gunner's Mate 1st Class (SW) Denny Gordon.
From Fletcher's anchorage in Dili Harbor, the lush green mountains and white crescent beaches tempted Sailors with memories of their homeport of Pearl Harbor.
However, the view from the shore shocked many crewmembers, unaccustomed to seeing the remnants of a war-torn country in the process of regeneration.
Gutted and scorched buildings lined every road; public parks were untended and overgrown. But a spirit strong in hope marked the people.
"I was amazed how friendly and full of dignity the East Timorese are," said Operations Specialist 3rd Class Leachim Bryson.
Yet, after the incredible suffering the citizens of Dili have endured, any help from flexible and responsive U.S. naval forces such as Fletcher is much welcomed, evident in the smiles and effusive interaction between the locals and Sailors ashore.
Operating under the command of the U. S. Support Group in East Timor, Fletcher Sailors shared their self-sufficient community of experts with the developing community of East Timor.
Nearly 200 of Fletcher's Sailors spent three days renovating a community education center, Knuia Impettu, in the Dili Harbor front area.
The Impettu center, run by Mariano Sabino, provides classes in English and information technology to local residents.
"When we arrived, there were lights in one of seven rooms, and the wiring and breaker box were unsafe," said Electrician's Mate 1st Class (SW)

Dennis Wright. "We installed 19 lights and 20 outlet boxes before we left."
Although the center owns 14 computers, only two were functional when Fletcher arrived on the scene.
"I've never seen so many [computer] viruses," said Information Systems Technician 1st Class (SW) Scott Parker.
When Fletcher left, all 14 computers were fully functional, with new software installed, despite the difficulties of negotiating the outdated technology.
Both the outside and inside of the building showed three layers of paint through, and the yard was overgrown and full of debris.
But that, too, would change before Fletcher would set sail for Townsville, Australia.
Sailors sweated through the hot days chipping paint, fixing plumbing, cleaning the yard, stenciling lettering on the building's signs, painting the interior and exterior of the two buildings, as well as putting up screens in the windows and constructing bookshelves. Francisco Corsiu, the spokesperson for Impettu, expressed his gratitude.
"We teach more than 100 students in English. Before, they all sat on the floor, and we had no lights. It is very hard to teach Word and Excel when the computers are broken! It will be much better for us now."
Coming together in a tremendous ship-wide effort, Fletcher's crew proved that the democratic and volunteer spirit can create a powerful sense of community across cultures.
With the materials, memories and community center that Fletcher helped make a reality, the citizens of Dili will have an example to follow as they struggle to establish a peaceful and effective government in the years to come.